MUSEUM OF ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY

KANNADA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

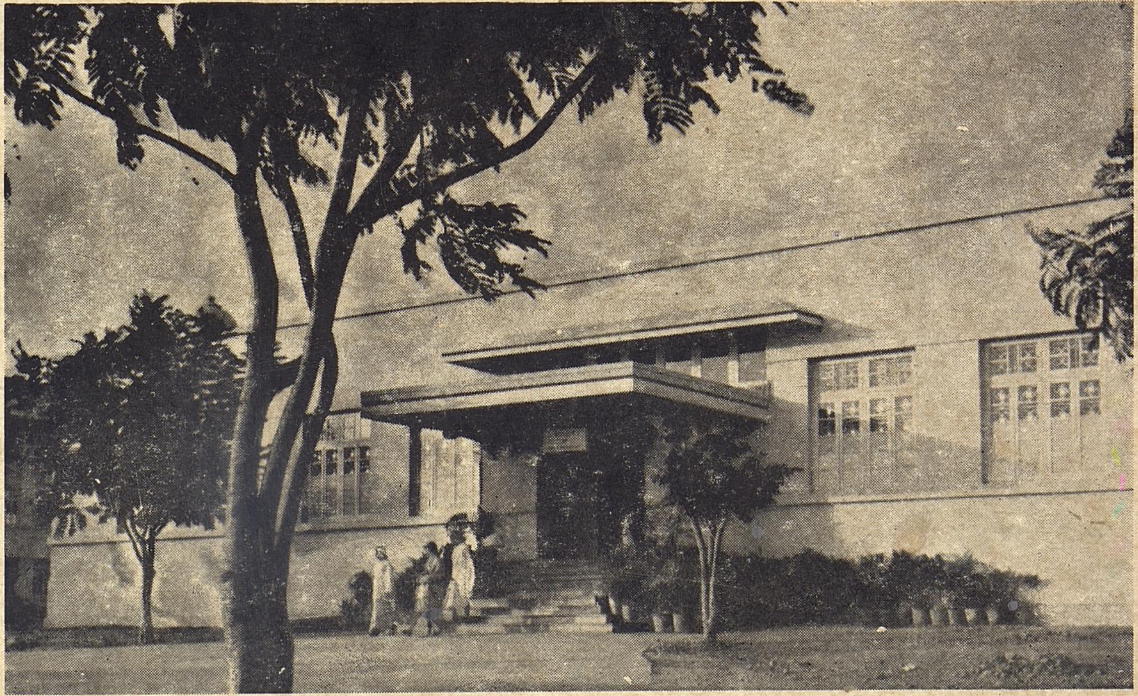
KARNATAK UNIVERSITY

DHARWAR - 3

Published by :
The Director,
Kannada Research Institute
Karnatak University, Dharwar - 3

Price :
RUPEE ONE

Printed at :
Ravindra Press,
U. B. Hills, Dharwar.



THE MUSEUM OF ART & ARCHÆOLOGY

MUSEUM
OF
ART
AND
ARCHAEOLOGY

KANNADA RESEARCH
INSTITUTE

KARNATAK UNIVERSITY, DHARWAR

OFFICE BEARERS

Vice-Chancellor
Dr. D. C. Pavate

Registrar
Shri. S. S. Wodeyar

Director
Kannada Research Institute
Dr. P. B. Desai

Lecturer
in Ancient Indian History
Dr. B. R. Gopal

Lecturer in Epigraphy
Dr S. H. Ritti

Curator of the museum
Shri. M. S. Nagaraja Rao

Photographer - Artist
Shri. R. S. Desai

INTRODUCTION

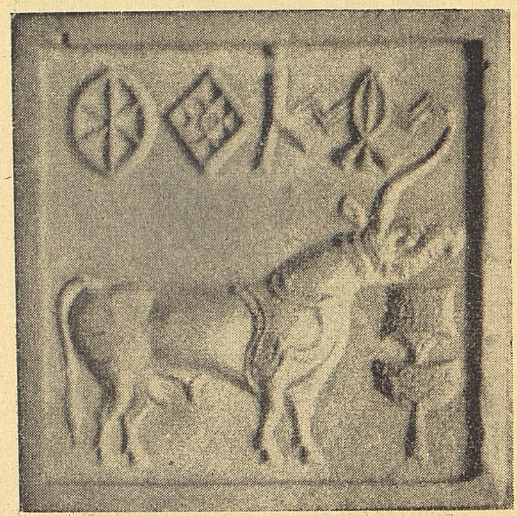
The Museum of Art and Archaeology is attached to the Kannada Research Institute, which is a department of the Karnatak University. Its valuable collection includes prehistoric antiquities, ancient and mediaeval inscriptions on stone and copper plates, images of stone and metal, memorial stones, wooden figures, paintings, paper - cuttings, photographs of temples, sketches of sculptures, old manuscripts, plaster casts of Indus Valley objects, terracotta figurines, coins, historical documents and other interesting finds. They are of great educative value and useful to the students of Indian art, architecture, history, archaeology and culture in general.

The museum provides rich material especially for the study of history and culture of Karnatak. Of particular interest are the panels of memorials set up in honour of warriors who died fighting, faithful ladies who accompanied their husbands in death and religious devotees who courted death by fasting. Finely carved images of Hindu and Jaina deities are also of absorbing charm.

Some of the interesting objects in the museum are described in the following pages.

Frontispiece

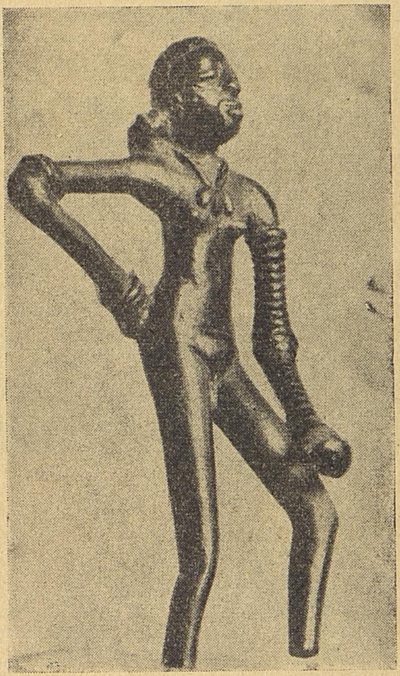
This handsome lady gracefully attired and adorned, engraving a Sanskrit inscription in Kannada script, is a symbol of Art and Archaeology harmonised. A unique sculpture, it hails from Jalasangavi, Bidar District, Mysore State. The epigraph, dated circa 1100 A. D., speaks of the rule of the illustrious king Vikramaditya VI of the Chalukya family.



Indus Valley Culture

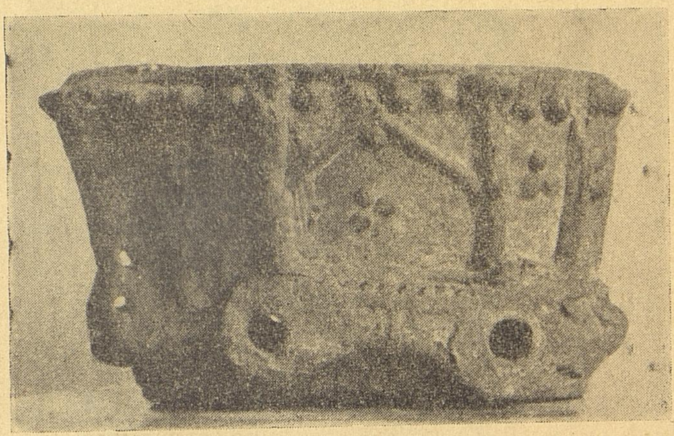
The specimens reproduced here represent the world famous Indus Valley Culture, circa 3000 B. C.

This replica of a seal denotes a religious cult object with a unicorn, a fabulous animal with elongated horn, standing before an altar. Above is an inscription in pictographs, the most ancient script of India.



Indus Valley Culture

This figure of a dancing girl is the greatest achievement in metal work of the primitive art. Highly appreciated for its design and execution, the dancer is shown as resting a while with her hand on her hip after a course of dance.



Sacrificial Vessel

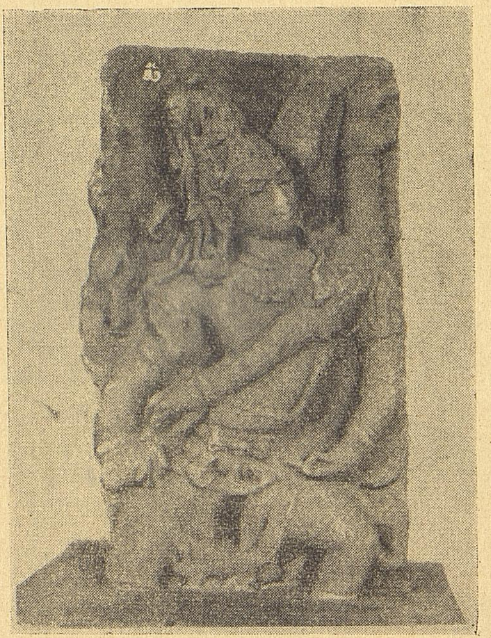
This interesting object (*ukhapatra*) was discovered at Itagi in the Shirhatti taluka of Dharwar District.

The pot containing the sacred fire was carried to the altar of worship by the performer of sacrifice.

It stands testimony to the prevalence of the sacrificial cult in this region in ancient times.

Temple Guardians

At the entrance of a temple the visitor is greeted by inviting figures guarding the supreme divinity in the inner sanctum. Here are two images of the divine guardians exquisitely carved in soap-stone. These exhibit the superb skill of the Chalukya artist of the 12th century A. D. Hailing from Belagali in Bijapur District, they were presented to the Museum by the Maharani of Mudhol.

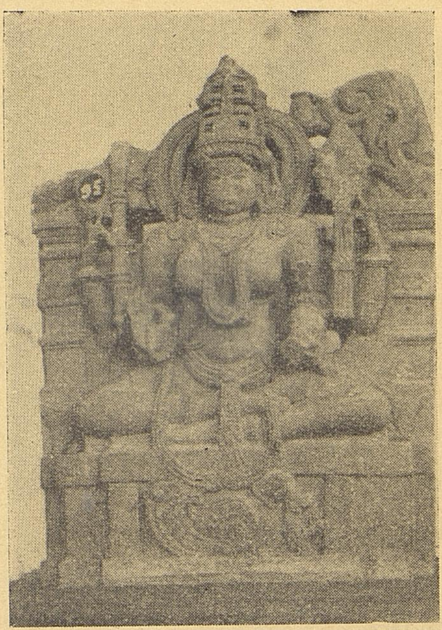


Cosmic Dancer

Nataraja or God Siva, in the dynamic posture of Cosmic Dancer, is a supreme conception of Indian philosophical art. Here is an early sculpture in stone ascribed to the 8th century A. D., a novelty, presenting a contrast to the familiar posture of the god of the later period. It was originally found at Pattadakal in Bijapur District.

Divine Flutist

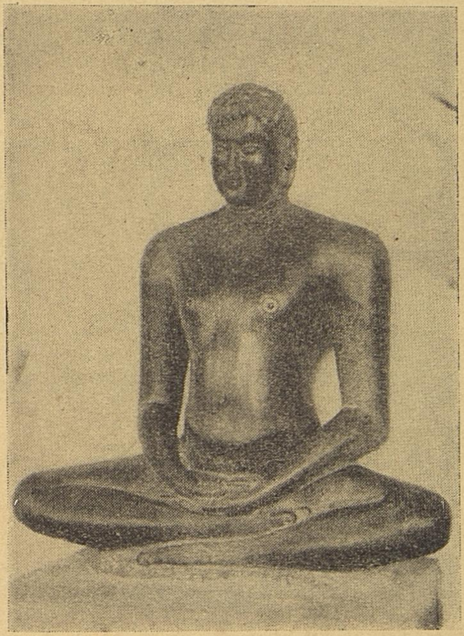
The cowherd boy of dark complexion, Gopala-Krishna enraptured the world of men and animals alike by the magic of his flute. This sculpture from Belavatti in Dharwar District, of about the 12th century A. D., vividly depicts the episode in attractive details. Its mutilated condition has not diminished its appeal as a fine piece of art.



Goddess of Learning

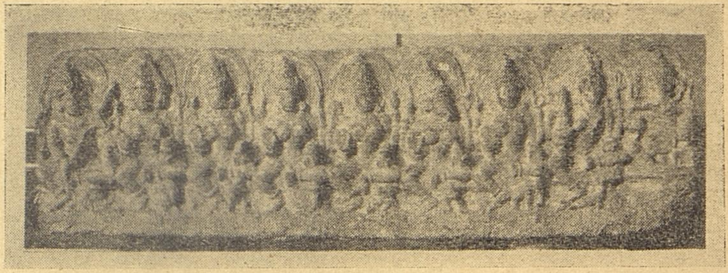
Our ancestors symbolised knowledge in the form of a deity called Sarasvati. Here is a finely carved and gracefully decorated image of the goddess. She is depicted with four hands holding a goad (*ankusa*), a noose (*pasa*), a book and a rosary.

Her vehicle, the swan, is shown below. The sculpture comes from Balur in Dharwar District. It may be ascribed roughly to the 13th century A.D.



Jina the Victor

According to Jaina philosophy there exist supermen who have liberated themselves from worldly bondage and attained perfect bliss. These are the hallowed ones (*Tirthankara*) and victors (*Jinas*). Mahavira was the last of such gifted souls who number twenty-four. This finely polished sculpture in ascetic posture, serene and contemplative, is that of a Jina. It hails from Lakkundi in Dharwar District and belongs to circa 12th century A.D.



Seven Mothers

The conception of seven mothers, the female counterparts of the gods, Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Varaha, Indra and Karttikeya, dates from the time of the early Chalukyas or still earlier (5th century A. D.). These were represented in a row of sculpture flanked by Ganesa and Virabhadra. Such a representation as an adjunct of temples became popular and widely prevalent in the religious architecture of the mediaeval centuries. Here is a fine specimen of about the 12th century hailing from Biligi in Bijapur District.

Suppressor of Demon

Not gods alone, goddesses too played their role in crushing the demons. One such is Mahishasuramardini who pounded the evil oppressor of mankind in the form of a turbulent buffalo. The above incarnation of the deity was popular throughout ancient India and was represented in early and late sculptures. Here is a heroic manifestation of the goddess holding weapons in her eight hands, nicely carved and decorated. It comes from Balur in Dharwar District and belongs to circa 13th century A. D.

Comrades in Art

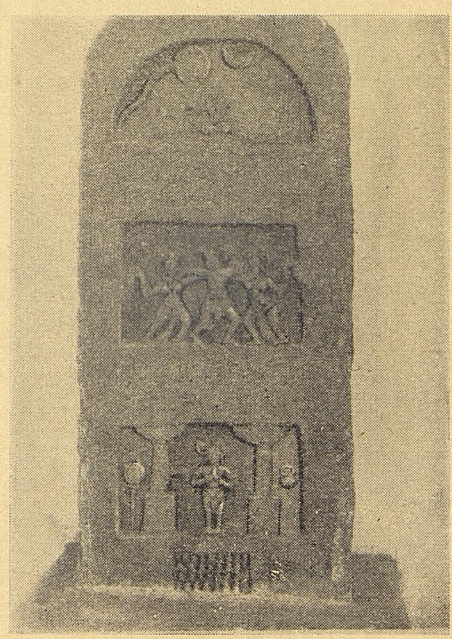
Music and symphony formed an integral part of religion and culture in Karnataka from early times. Sculptural representations associated with this fine art are abundantly found in temples.

Here are two artistes encased in an ornamental crocodile scroll. Symmetrically dressed and decorated, one is playing on flute and the other is keeping time with cymbals. Unmindful of their position on the yawning jaws of the ferocious animal, they are lost in their trade, their faces beaming with ineffable joy. This is one of the finest pieces of miniature sculptural art.

Hero Honoured

Undaunted warriors themselves, the people of Karnataka fittingly honoured their heroes. As an illustration stands this richly carved memorial in stone. The lowermost panel depicts the heroic fight of the warrior against heavy odds on the battlefield. His death has its immediate reward in heaven, the journey whereto is described in the two upper panels. The martyr is immortalised in the topmost scene.

Karnataka can boast of such memorials in thousands found all over in its villages and fields.

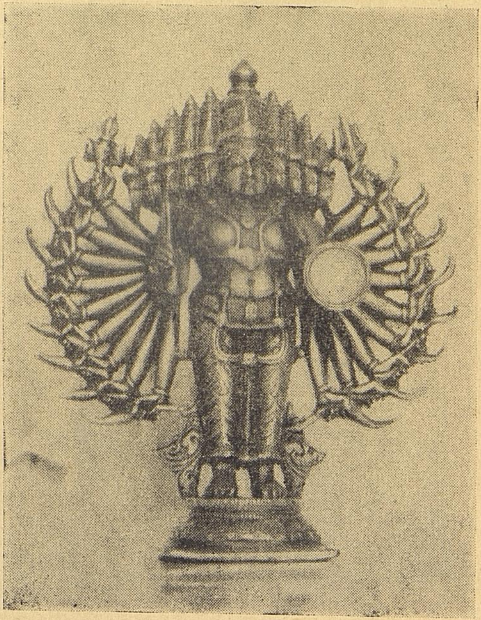


Leap into Fire

This sculpture depicts the scene of a person who died jumping into fire on the occasion of a solar eclipse to attain bliss in the solar world. Such was the belief current in olden days. Boppa, the religious martyr, who performed this act in the 12th century A. D., hailed from Tilivalli in the Hangal Taluka of Dharwar District.

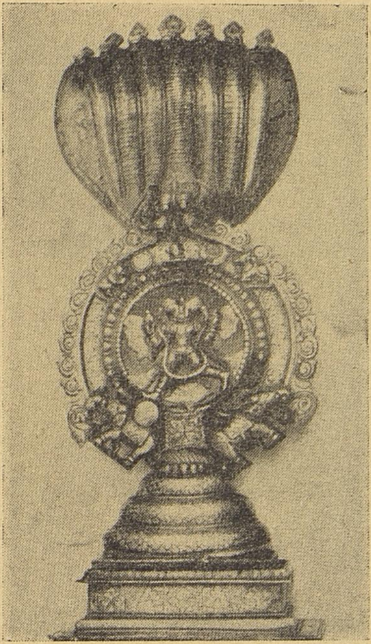
Religious Martyr

When worldly life no longer interested him, the religious minded Jaina entered upon the vow of fasting unto death (*sallekhana*). The devotee who welcomed this ordeal was honoured by a memorial set up to commemorate the event. Here is one depicting the last phase of such a pious life.



Hydraheaded Monster

Ravana, the villain of the Ramayana is depicted as a monster with ten heads and twenty hands. Here is a curious image of this demon in metal with a circular array of heads, hands and weapons (circa 18th century A.D.). It is a rare specimen and arouses our curiosity.

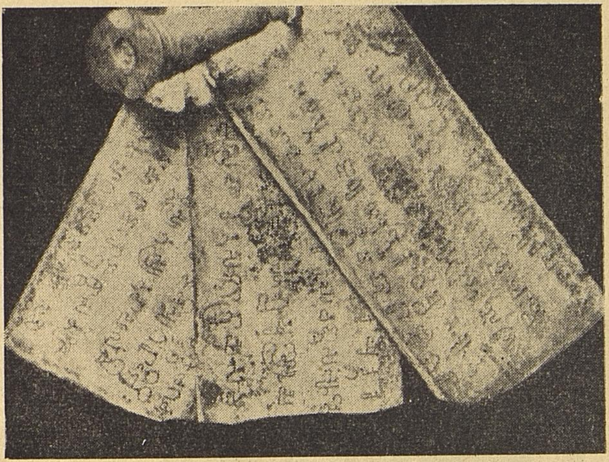


Insignia of Mysore

A bird with twin eagle heads and human body, associated with elephants is a queer zoological combination. Such was the Gandabherunda, the mythical insignia of Mysore rulers. This artistically framed metallic piece displaying the emblem is sanctified by the serpent hoods and other saivite symbols. It comes from Shahpur and belongs to circa 18th contury A.D. Its workmanship merits praise.

Curious Nutcracker

An amorous couple indeed; but this is a useful object for a betelnut chewer. The two arms of the nutcracker are moulded into figures of a man and a woman, handsomely designed and tastefully decorated. When the two arms are seperated to insert the nut, the lovers move closer for a kiss. The ingenuity of the artist is admirable. The object is probably of 18th century A.D.



Early Copper-plate Charter

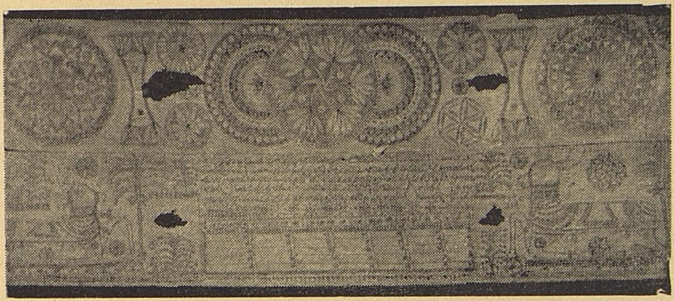
This copper plate charter fastened to a ring bearing the royal seal, is engraved in archaic Kannada script of about 500 A. D. It commences with an invocation to Buddha and registers the grant of a village to the Buddhist Sangha by the king Asankita of Bhoja family.

Inscriptions on stone and copper plates play an important role in revealing our eventful past. This is an early copper plate record in the museum's collection. It comes from Hiregutti in north Kanara District.

An Early Coin

This coin was issued by Mulananda, a provincial governor under the Satavahanas. The obverse contains a three arched hill with the chief's name engraved in Brahmi script above. A tree in the railing is shown on the reverse. This is one of the earliest coins in the museum's collection. It is of circa 2nd century B.C.

LITERATURE ON PALM-LEAF



Manuscript Illustrated

Before the advent of paper, Palm-leaf was used for literary writing. This practice, however, continued longer until a late period. The museum owns a good number of old Sanskrit and Kannada works on palf-leaf and paper some of which are illustrated. The present one, a treatise on grammar, is an artistically worked manuscript on palm-leaf. It comes from Kurugod in Bellary District and belongs to about 11th century A.D.

And Many More....

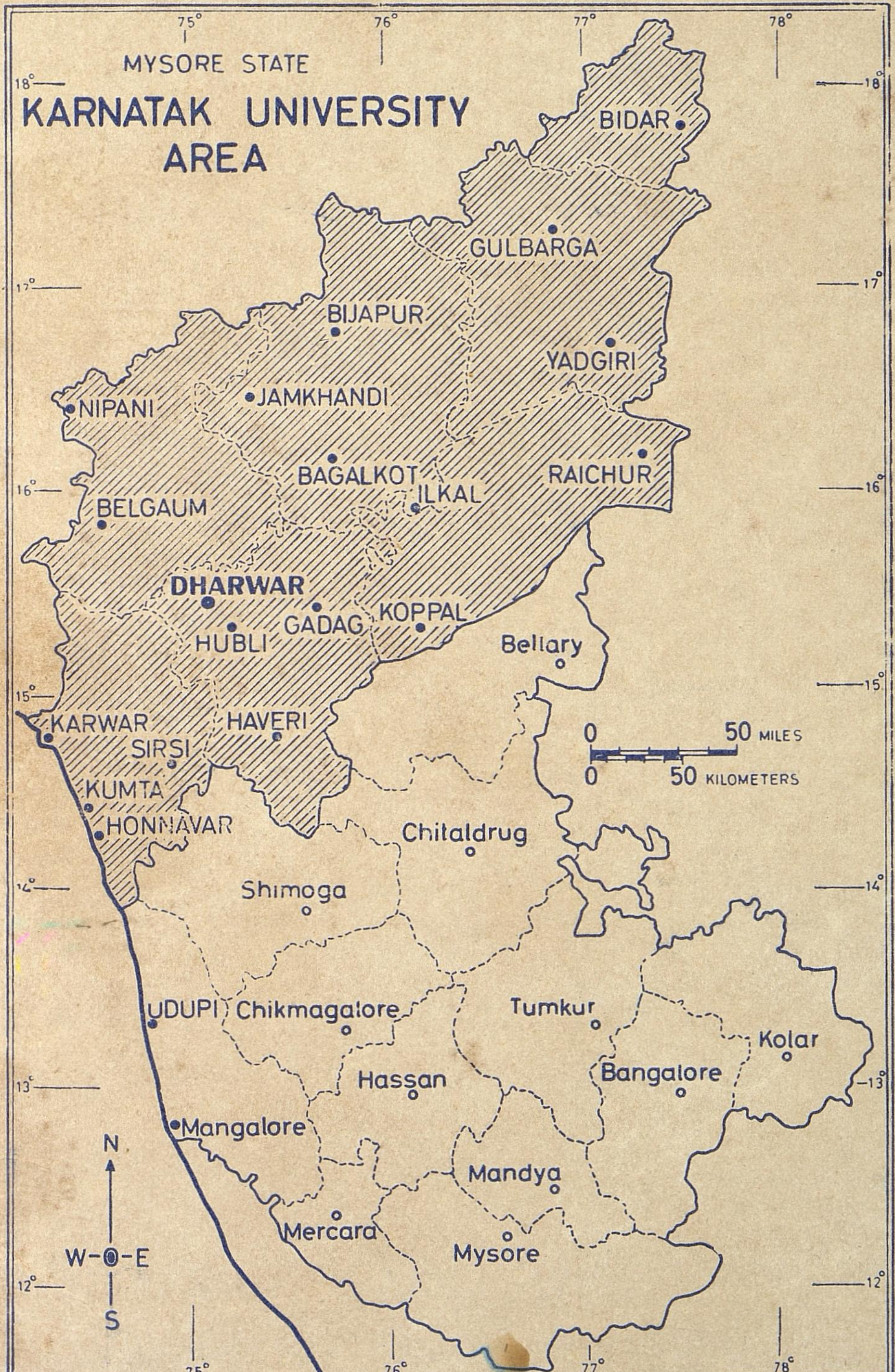
The Museum offers many more attractions to the visitor. Mention may be made of Sati memorials, metallic images of the jaina pantheon, bronze figures of Uma and Chandrasekhara, copies of frescoes from Ajanta, Badami and Vijayanagara, sketches of the panoramic life depicted in sculpture and bas reliefs at Badami, Aihole, Pattadakal and Hampi, flying gandharvas, dancing ladies, hunting scenes, soldiers' march, Vidyaranya in procession, photographs of temples and other structures representing different styles of architecture and writing instruments before the introduction of paper.

KANNADA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

This institute was started in 1939. Formerly it was under the Government of Bombay and subsequently under the Government of Mysore. It was taken over by the Karnatak University in 1957. It has a musem of art and archaeology and a photographic studio. It provides for post-graduate teaching in Ancient Indian History and Archaeology and also runs a diploma course in epigraphy. With it is associated the post-graduate department of Ancient Indian History and Culture.

KARNATAK UNIVERSITY

Outstanding among the progressive modern Universities, this institution was started in the year 1949. It has today twenty - three post-graduate departments in Science and Humanities with an uptodate library, four constituent colleges, and thirtynine affiliated colleges in the Faculties of Arts, Social Science, Natural Science, Law, Medicine, Engineering and Agriculture. Its total strength of students is about twenty two thousand.


MYSORE STATE
KARNATAK UNIVERSITY AREA
75°
76°
77°
78°
18°
17°
16°
15°
14°
13°
12°
BIDAR
GULBARGA
BIJAPUR
YADGIRI
NIPANI
JAMKHANDI
BAGALKOT
ILKAL
RAICHUR
BELGAUM
DHARWAR
GADAG
KOPPAL
HUBLI
Bellary
KARWAR
HAVERI
SIRSI
KUMTA
HONNAVAR
0
50 MILES
0
50 KILOMETERS
Chitaldrug
Shimoga
UDUPI
Chikmagalore
Tumkur
Kolar
Hassan
Bangalore
Mangalore
Mandya
Mercara
Mysore
N
W-O-E
S